

**Teaching Hebrew as an additional language:
a classroom-based case study**

Yona Wisel-Gilead

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University of Technology, Sydney

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Certificate of Original Authorship

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

The teaching and learning of Modern Hebrew as an additional language has traditionally been a practice-driven discipline rather than a research-focused field of instruction, with the majority of practitioners in this field focused on teaching the language rather than researching pedagogical issues. However, the discipline is currently going through a transitional phase in which pedagogy and classroom practices are receiving increased academic attention. By providing a research-based ‘thick description’ of one successful Modern Hebrew beginners-level program, set within a large Australian university, this case study analyses and theorizes teaching and learning interactions and

classroom behaviours that are so commonplace that they are assumed to be unimportant, or so fleeting and ephemeral that they sometimes operate below the threshold of teacher consciousness.

Senior (1999, p. 3)

Through three levels of data analysis, this thesis contributes to closing a gap in knowledge about the teaching and learning of Modern Hebrew as an additional language: it provides clearer insights into beginner-level classroom-based teaching and learning interactions; and it offers some theorization to the concepts that underpin the practice-based beginner-level curriculum and pedagogy of the Rothberg International School for Overseas Students at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Thus this thesis contributes to theorizing the currently largely praxis-based discipline, and helps to develop a stronger theoretical understanding of how and why students can be assisted in their learning of Modern Hebrew as an additional language. Finally, it is hoped that the research carried out in this thesis will help to establish a stronger research-based agenda in this discipline and position it within the broader field of L2 research and scholarship; specifically in Australia, but with international applications as well.